

323-1 Take home final exam 2002

Final Exam

all take home exams must be turned in by 10 am on Tuesday Dec. 10 to Chuck's mailbox in AMS 215. No late exams. If you do not meet this deadline you **MUST** take the in class exam at 12 noon on Wednesday Dec. 11.

The final (35% of final grade) will be for undergrads a choice: (a) a takehome essay based on screenings during the last week of the quarter, or (b) an inclass exam in two parts: writing an essay after seeing an unannounced film (about 40 min). The second part is over the entire course--screenings, readings, lectures and discussion. Grads must do the take home exam (30% of final grade).

Choose one of the following. Write a cogent essay of at least 3000 words. Your essay should discuss works seen in the course, and draw on the assigned readings (use appropriate footnotes/citations). You can include discussion of films available at the library Media Center, outside screenings, etc. Turn in one copy to Chuck's mailbox in 215 AMS. Send one copy by email.

1. Histories of visual art and literature are frequently talked about in terms of a "canon"--a set of works which experts agree are suitable for representing the field. Often the canon is linked to aesthetic value--the "best" works are taught and held up for examination. Discuss the canon of experimental film. Who and what influenced it? What has caused it to be renegotiated? On what basis should it be constructed? Your answer should include some works seen in the course which you think should be in the canon and some you think should be outside of it (that is, assuming you think drawing boundaries is important).
2. Although it is complained that structural films are "all alike," we've seen a very wide range of them this quarter. Discuss the variety of structural film and how useful or valid Sitney's definition of it is. Discuss specifically: **Shift**, **Serene Velocity**, and **T,O,U,C,H,I,N,G**. Include a discussion of minimalist aesthetics in **Blow Job**, **8 1/2 x 10**, etc.
3. Read Susan Sontag's famous essay on Camp (in her *Against Interpretation*) and then discuss films seen in class that seem to fit a Camp aesthetic such as **Weiners and Buns Musical**, **Flaming Creatures**, **Scorpio Rising**, and **Hold Me While I'm Naked**. Consider in your analysis also works that are comic and parodistic as well such as: **What is a Man?**, **Entre'acte**, **Schmeerguntz**.
4. The avant garde is often identified with a rejection of the dominant society and its way of seeing things and its social values. Discuss five works seen in this class which represent this aspect of the rebellious or dissenting experimental tradition. You should develop a larger thesis about the relation of the avant garde to society.
5. The avant garde historically has ranged between one tendency that aims at the pure, the perfect, the spiritual, in both or either form and content. The extreme opposite tendency aims at the impure, the descent to the depths,

extremes of body and mind such as sex, madness and drugs. Discuss at least three works from each of these traditions and three additional works which operate in a middle zone, drawing on the extremes.

6. Based on your understanding of the Beat Generation writers and the 60s Counterculture, analyze at least five films which seem the cinematic equivalent of Beat and Hippie movement literature and lifestyle.

7. The avant garde changes over time and in particular with changes in technology and the institutional base for experimental work. Develop an essay around this theme using 6 different films screened in the course.

8. (for grad students) How can we organize the field of avant garde film? Compare and contrast Sitney's *Visionary Film* and David James *Allegories of Cinema*, in particular, to develop your own position about this question.